be lacking in important details and requisite information. Accordingly, the Government of Maharashtra has been intimated to revise these project reports.

(d) Does not arise.

Clearance to irrigation projects

632. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the numer of clearances given by his Ministry to Irrigation projects in Andhra Pradesh during year 2006;

(d) the details of such projects, district wise;

(c) whether some projects are still under consideration; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER Of- STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRINAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) One project, namely Vamsadhara irrigation project phase-ll of Stage-ll in Srikakulam District was granted site clearance during 2006.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The projects which are still under consideration for grant of environmental clearance are:- (i) Velegonda project in Prakasam District, (ii) Vamsadhara project in Srikakulam District, (iii) Sripadasagar project in Karimnagar district, & (iv) Handri Niva Sujala Shravanthi project in Kurnool, Ananthapur, Kadapa, & Chitoor districts.

Horseshoe crabs

632. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the horseshoe crabs that are among the oldest living creatures on earth, are losing a daily battle in Orissa's Chandipore, their last bastion in India;

(b) whether it is a fact that horseshoe crabs that were once available in lakhs in the country are high in demand for their immense medicinal

value and they are being caught and supplied in bulk to dealers in Bhubaneshwar by local fishermen; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to save the 500 million years old creature?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRINAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) As reported by Govenment of Orissa, two species of Horseshoe crabs viz. *Carcinoscorpius rotundicauda* and *Tachypleus gigas* are found along the Chandipore coast. Horseshoe Crabs are important for different medical uses. However, they are not captured for any commercial purpose except for some incidental catch in the fishing nets. No reports of bulk catch and supply of Horseshoe Crabs to dealers in Bhubaneshwar have been received.

(c) The following steps have been taken for protection and conservation of Horseshoe Crabs:

1 Wildlife institute of India, Dehradun has carried out study on the conservation status of Horseshoe crabs along the Orissa coast.

2. No commercial production and marketing of bio-medical products would be permitted by exploitation of wild population of Horseshoe Crabs.

3. Ministry of Science and Technology has been requested to explore commercial tapping of the pharmaceutical potential of this species only after scientifically proven breeding programmes including monitoring and certification protocols have been put in place.

4. Awareness camps organized for the fishermen to minimize incidental catches.

Manas national park

634. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that twenty years of insurgency has destroyed Assam's Manas National Park;

(b) whether it is a fact that Manas has lost its entire rhino population and the number of tigers has come down from 93 in 1987 to 65 in the year 2000; and